

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5125

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As of January 29, 2007

**Title:** An act relating to hunting and fishing license fees.

**Brief Description:** Merging fishing and hunting license fees for certain veterans and persons with disabilities.

**Sponsors:** Senators Jacobsen, Morton, Swecker, Hatfield, Rockefeller, Shin, Parlette, Rasmussen, Sheldon, Delvin, Franklin and Roach; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation: 1/25/07.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, OCEAN & RECREATION

**Staff:** William Bridges (786-7424)

**Background:** There are separate statutory sections that specify reduced fees and approved activities for hunting, fishing, and shellfish licenses for veterans, persons with disabilities, and other qualifying groups.

Hunting Licenses: A "youth" rate is available for honorably discharged veterans residing in the state that: (1) are at least 65 years old and have a service-connected disability; (2) have a 30 percent or more service-connected disability; or (3) are confined to a wheelchair.

Fishing Licenses: A five-dollar license is available to the following individuals: (1) honorably discharged veterans residing in the state with 30 percent or more service-connected disabilities; (2) persons who are blind or visually impaired; (3) persons with developmental disabilities documented by a physician licensed to practice in the state; and (4) persons who are physically disabled and confined to wheelchairs.

Shellfish Harvester Cards: A designated harvester card is available to persons with disabilities. The card allows a companion to help a person with a disability to fish or harvest shellfish.

Group Fishing and Shellfish Harvesting Permits: Group permits may be issued to qualified outdoor education programs, state-operated facilities, and state-licensed nonprofit facilities or programs that care for the sick, elderly, and persons with physical or mental disabilities.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

Respectful Language: In 2004, the Legislature directed the Code Reviser to avoid certain words used to describe persons with disabilities. For example, "individuals with disabilities" is to be used instead of "disabled."

**Summary of Bill:** Clarifying the Definition of "Person with a Disability": The statutory definition of "person with a disability" is changed to conform with the regulatory definition of the same term used by the Department of Fish & Wildlife when it issues licenses to hunters with disabilities. A substantive change is made: the regulatory requirement that a "person with disability" seeking a designated shellfish harvester card have a "significant limitation" in the use of upper or lower extremities is superseded by the new statutory definition requiring a "severe limitation."

Consolidating Statutory Sections: The reduced rates for hunting and fishing are consolidated into one statutory section. The following substantive changes are made: (1) The "honorably discharged" requirement is removed for veterans with a 30 percent or more service-related disability; (2) The eligibility for reduced-rate hunting licenses is expanded to include blind and visually impaired persons, persons who permanently use wheelchairs, and persons with developmental disabilities; however, a residency requirement is added for those same individuals; and (3) The requirement that a developmental disability be documented by a physician licensed to practice in this state is removed.

Using Respectful Language: Changes are made in the fish and wildlife code that conform with respectful language requirements.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: The bill merges sections of law for the convenience of citizens. It is intended to be policy neutral. The department worked with the Fish and Wildlife Commission's Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities to develop this bill.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Rory Calhoun, member, Department of Fish and Wildlife Internal American's with Disabilities Act Committee; Tom Davis, Department of Fish and Wildlife; Albert Vincent, member, Advisory Committee to the Fish and Wildlife Commission for Persons with Disabilities.